

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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September 12, 1947

* SWEETCLOVER-SEED PRODUCTION THIS YEAR
INDICATED SECOND SMALLEST IN 23 YEARS

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With prospective acreages of sweetclover seed smaller in 10 out of 15 producing States, production of this seed may be 19 percent smaller than last year, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics stated today. Production this year is forecast at 501,900 bushels (30,114,000 pounds) of thresher-run seed, which would make this crop the smallest since 1924, except for 1943 when 452,800 bushels were produced. It compares with 618,400 bushels (37,104,000 pounds) in 1946 and the 1936-45 average of 873,650 bushels (52,419,000 pounds). Smaller crops than last year are in prospect for Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Montana, and Colorado. But larger crops are indicated for Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, Kansas, and Wyoming. Crops in Indiana and Wisconsin are expected to be about the same as last year.

Acreage for harvest this year, forecast at 188,200 acres, is only about 10,000 acres larger than the record small acreage (178,000) in 1943. It compares with 232,800 acres in 1946 and the 10-year average of 339,250 acres. Only in Ohio and Michigan, where it was so wet in the spring that sweetclover could not be plowed under in time to plant other crops, and also in Wyoming, were there more acres of sweetclover for seed than last year. The expected reduction in acreage in most other States is attributed to relatively higher prices received by growers for other crops; sweetclover weevil in some States; hot, dry weather during August which caused much seed to be lost through shattering; and conflict of harvesting of this seed with the belated harvesting of grain crops.

Yields per acre in only three States--Minnesota, North Dakota, and Kansas--are expected to be larger this year than last, while yields in 8 other States are indicated to be smaller. The United States average of 2.67 bushels (160 pounds) this year is almost the same as that (2.66 bushels) for last year and only slightly larger than the average of 2.60 bushels (156 pounds).

Loss in cleaning the sweetclover seed this year is estimated at 21.1 percent. This compares with 20.6 percent in 1946 and the 1941-45 average of 21.8 percent. The disposition survey made last spring indicated that 71.4 percent of the 1946 crop of sweetclover seed was sold to dealers. If this percentage prevails this year and production of clean seed turns out as forecast, dealers may be expected to handle nearly 17 million pounds of clean seed from the 1947 crop, compared with about 21 million of the 1946 crop.

Harvesting of sweetclover seed averaged 8 days later than last year and 4 days later than usual. Dates on which harvesting began or was expected to begin averaged as follows: August 1 in Iowa; August 3 in Kansas; August 7 in Ohio; August 9 in Illinois; August 12 in Indiana and Missouri; August 15 in Nebraska; August 20 in Montana; August 21 in Michigan; August 22 in North Dakota; August 24 in Minnesota and Colorado; August 26 in Wisconsin; September 1 in South Dakota; and September 5 in Wyoming.

Imports of sweetclover seed during the year ended June 30, 1947 were 10,369,800 pounds, compared with 11,048,400 pounds a year earlier

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and the 1941-45 average of 3,407,140 pounds.

Current supplies of sweetclover seed, including production and carry-over, totaling 28,168,000 pounds of clean seed, are 20 percent smaller than in 1946 and 29 percent below the 1941-45 average.

Sweetclover Seed Acreage, Yield, Production, etc.

Average 1941-45, Annual 1946 and 1947

	Average 1941-45	1946	Indicated 1947
Number of acres of seed.....	255,180	232,800	188,200
Yield per acre in bushels.....	2.55	2.66	2.67
Production of thresher-run:			
Bushels.....	642,940	618,400	501,900
Pounds.....	38,576,400	37,104,000	30,114,000
Loss in cleaning in percentages (approximate)	21.8	20.6	21.1
Production of clean seed in pounds....	30,139,200	29,472,000	23,754,000
Farm carry-over in pounds.....	3,088,000	1,440,000	1,330,000
Dealer carry-over in pounds.....	6,316,000	<u>1/</u> 4,274,000	3,084,000
Supplies (production plus carry-over):			
in pounds.....	39,543,200	35,186,000	28,168,000

1/ Includes 34,000 pounds held by the Government on June 30, 1946.

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